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The festal dance each soul delights,
And pleasing swell the Bromian rites,
Then glows the breast with living fire,
Then lightly sweeps the choral lyre,
The flute deep-breathing joins the sound,
And air-borne music floats around.

IV.

When issuing from our hallow'd fanes,
Ascending swells the voice of song,
When choral hymns and mystic strains,
Religion's sacred rights prolong:

Then first we hail the name of Jove,
Whose power nor man, nor God withstands,
Self-pois'd he shakes the realms above,
Or hangs the earth on airy bands.

Then Neptune, ruler of the main,
Whose circling arms round nature hurl'd
Binds in a massy rock-wove chain,
The solid fabric of the world.

To Ether next ascends the prayer,
His are the joys from health that flow,
To Ether, sovereign prince of air,
Who bids the breast with rapture glow:

And sacred hymn, and mystic song,
Proclaim the solemn festal hour,
When borne on passing winds along,
Our rites appease the Loxian power.

Beneath his car with lightning's speed,
High-prancing to the signal-sound,
Light bounding flies the generous steed,
And thunders on Olympic ground.

Through heaven's high portals, ever bright,
Untir'd he moves in mystic plan,
And pours the fluid beam of light,
Rever'd by gods, ador'd by man.

V.

Where Cynthia's rose-clad summits swell,
There sacred Phœbus loves to dwell,
There may our votive incense find,
The friend of Gods, and human kind.
And thou chaste Dian, power divine,
Dread goddess of the Ephesian shrine,
To thee, light swells from sacred shades,
The festal hymns of Lydian maids,
When air-borne forms adorn the groves,
Of Athens, land of many loves.
Minerva first of powers above,
Thou shaker of the shield of Jove,
We hail in choral circling band,
The goddess of our natal land;
And Bacchus next the strain employs,
The God of mimic sportive joys,
Whose filmy veil, and magic power,
Can hide the pang of sorrow's hour,
With light-form'd hopes the mind beguile,
And plant on miseries cheek a smile.
Now solemn swells the voice of praise,
To where Parnassian torches blaze,
Ascending to th' aerial land,
The sacred guards of Athens' land.

Dublin. WALSINGHAM.

LITERATURE, ANCIENT AND MODERN

OBSERVATIONS ON ROMANCE, FROM THE FRENCH OF LA HARPE

GOOD romances are the history of the human heart; but they did not assume this character on their first appearance among us. The most ancient, such as "The Romance of the Rose," may not have been useless for the improvement of our language at a time when it was not thought worthy of being employed in the composition of serious writings. I freely confess, I have never been able to read either that or "Astrea," notwithstanding the latter is much more modern, and was very much admired at the beginning of the last century. Some traits of simplicity, some pastoral images which may have been pleasing at a time when we were unprovided with better models, cannot make amends for verbosity and bombast, unless among professed philologists, men of reading and etymologists, who take delight in penetrating into the dark antiquities of our language, to explore its ancient jargon, and who think their patience sufficiently rewarded when they have been able to discover some roots of modern words, or to quote some happy phrase. Every body takes the nourishment he likes best: we even see this antiquated idiom introduced into modern productions, and writers of the eighteenth century imitating the language which was spoken in the twelfth. In the romances of the present day, the style of "The Fair Maguelon" and of "Pierre de Provence" is used. Some people discover wonderful invention in this species of imitation; as for me, who am unacquainted with such refinement, I can

only see an easy method of freeing ones-self from the shackles of style and genius.

Nor have I been able to read "Clelia" or "Cepus" to the end; each of which has been the subject of the well directed satire of Boileau; nor the "Ariana" of Dessmarets still more worthless, yet not less esteemed. 'Tis not for want of inclination, but I cannot read what wearies me.

In these cases we must always recollect the expression of Voltaire; *How lucky it is to come at a proper time!* Madame Scudery, with her long romances, acquired a great celebrity, at least till the time in which Despreaux reduced them to their true value. The people of that day were seized with a frenzy for portraits, and this lady did not fail to draw those of all the celebrated characters of her own day, under ancient names. Every one was flattered at the idea of having a place in this gallery of pictures. Mademoiselle de Rambouillet appeared there under the name of Artenice; this she always preserved even in the funeral oration which was composed to her memory: and the modesty of the solitary students of the Port Royal was not proof against the petty vanity of seeing themselves drawn in flattering colours in these lying compositions, which at the same time their taste rejected, and the rigour of Jansenism disapproved. They admitted those books which they considered poisonous, though in reality their only poison was their tediousness; we may, at least, be certain that self-love had sufficient power to blend a little of its honey with what they styled the venom of these writings.

The master-piece of this kind of romance (if we ought to apply such a term to any of them) is undoubtedly "Cleopatra," notwithstanding its enormous length, its endless conversations, and its descriptions, over which we must leap with all our might, the complication of twenty different intrigues which have no apparent connection, and escape the best memory, the monstrous wounds which excite no terror, and to which Madam de Sevigne had no dislike, the laughable resurrections and the princesses who never draw forth our tears. With all these faults, which are repeated in "Cassandra" and "Pharamond," Calprenede had genius; his heroes have an elevated mien; his characters are boldly designed; that of Artabanes has passed into a proverb. It is true that this proverb itself exposes the absurdity of the exaggeration; but, in a word, the works of this author breathe a spirit of heroism although often of an extravagant kind, and may furnish useful lessons to those who attempt tragedy, provided they guard against the excess into which Crebillon has fallen, who, inflamed with the study of books of this kind, has transferred the taste and style of romance into his theatrical pieces.

It has long been the fashion to laugh at heroines of romance, with whom the most respectful declaration is an offence of such magnitude that it cannot be expiated but by years of penance. But nothing of this kind can be compared with "Polexandre," of M. de Gombervllie, in five huge volumes of a thousand or twelve hundred pages each, which abound with a folly so extraordinary that it gives courage to attempt a cursory perusal of them. The Princess, who is the heroine of this formidable work, is one Alcidiana, the most extraordinary creature that human imagination ever conceived. She is beloved by all the monarchs in the world, and ambassadors come from all corners of the universe to demand her in marriage. Those who could not aspire so high are contented to declare themselves her knights at five or six hundred leagues distance, break lances to her honour, and cease to look upon any other woman in the world, after having once seen the portrait of Alcidiana. It would at first appear that such distant homage could not be attended with bad consequences, and that the lady must be very captious who would take offence at it. Yet the princess is highly displeased; she takes it extremely ill that the great Khan of Tartary, and the King of Cashmire should have the boldness to fall in love with her though at some distance. In short, to be enamoured of Alcidiana, even at the distance of a thousand leagues, is a crime deserving of death, except in

Polexander, the hero of the romance, to whom alone she had granted permission to love her, because after all it is necessary that some one should obtain this favour. Polexander therefore travels round the world defying all he meets; and when he has killed one, wounded another, dethroned this king, imprisoned that one, and obliged all to give their word that they would never dare to say that they were in love with Alcidiana, he returns to his mistress who deigns to honour him with a look, but cannot yet endure the idea of marrying one whom she has caused to commit so much slaughter. He finds as much difficulty in the thought as herself, and even after he is married to her, can scarcely persuade himself that a mortal man can be the husband of Alcidiana, and that he is the happy mortal; his head grows giddy, when he is about to ascend the stair-case which leads to his wife's apartment; two squires are obliged to support him on his way up, and the story terminates, before we are fully assured that his life is out of danger.

It must be acknowledged that we have been imitators in every thing, in our faults as well as in our beauties. We have borrowed, from the hot and unruly imaginations of the people of the south and west, among whom learning flourished before it arrived at our latitude, the ridiculous extravagance of character which at first reigned in our great romances. We imitated the Spaniards, who in turn had copied from the Arabians. It is in the writings of these latter that we discover the originals of princes who are in love with the likeness of a princess at the other end of the world, and who sometimes never existed, as we find it in the adventures of a prince spoken of in the Arabian Nights, who traverses the whole world in search of the object of a passion to which the sight of a portrait had given birth, and who, at the end of, I know not how many years, is informed by a sage, that the princess of whom he is enamoured has been one of the mistresses of Solomon. The enthusiastic gallantry of the Castilians and Arabians, their exalted passions, their invincible Paladins, who dispose of the destiny of kings and empires, all such ideas beyond nature and probability governed our literature at the time when the Spanish power was paramount in Europe, and led us to adopt its dresses, its festivals, and its tournaments: thus it is that the history of taste is always united with that of manners. We may say more; it was with these extravagant inventions, as it is with all errors, which are originally founded on some degree of truth. The passion of love, among the Asiatic and southern nations, had in fact, a degree of enthusiasm which the western nations imitated, without being able to equal, and which the ambitious imagination of our writers of romance aimed at surpassing, even though the attempt led them to the height of absurdity. With respect to the hero, the actions of Du Guesclin in Spain, and of Warwick in England, both of whom had overturned and re-established thrones, at a time when kings not possessing great bodies of mercenary troops, and great trains of artillery, depended more on the abilities of those about them, and on the vicissitude of fortune; examples such as these seemed to afford some foundation for the supposition of adventurers, whom our romances represent as making and unmaking kings, but attended with circumstances totally void of all shadow of probability.

The spirit of the court of Louis XIV. during the youth of that prince, who was somewhat of a romantic turn, was at first favourable to these extravagant fictions, and the parts which had been played by women in our civil wars, the all powerful influence they had enjoyed, accustomed our writers, to attribute an extraordinary degree of weight to a sex which always governs where it is not a slave. They certainly overleaped the bounds, 'tis always so at the commencement: real taste leads us back to nature. The force of ridicule exploded all these heroic extravagancies with which we had been inundated by Spain; we had long paid the tribute of imitation to the writers of this country: they were our masters, as the Italians had been, when we composed our histories on their novels, and that our poetry, with a few exceptions, breathed the affectation of Petrarch, without possessing his harmony or elegance. At length Boileau and Racine

taught us to imitate nature and the antients, and to feel that love is better painted in twenty verses of the fourth book of the Æneid, than in all the romances of modern Europe.

The first which relates a series of rational adventures recorded with interest and elegance, was that of "Zaida," the composition of a female. It is just that we should owe this first model to the natural and quick feelings which distinguish women of well cultivated minds. Nothing can be more affecting or original than the situation of Gonsalvo and Zaida, in love with each other in a desert, ignorant of each other's language, and both afraid that they had seen each other too late. The incidents arising from such a situation are a true and happy description of the emotions of passion. Though the rest of the work is not altogether equally interesting as the beginning, and though the character of Alphonzo, jealous of a dead man, and ready to quarrel with his mistress on his account, be somewhat too extravagant, yet the spirit of the romance is retained to the end, and it will always be read with pleasure. "The princess of Cleves" is another of Madame de la Fayette's compositions, still more amiable and affecting. Never has the combat between love and duty been described with greater delicacy; it has been granted only to another woman, at the end of another century to describe, with equal success the struggles of love, against obstacles, and against virtue. "The Count de Comminges," by Madame de Tencin," may be looked upon as the sequel of the Princess of Cleves.

To pass from Madame de la Fayette to Scarron, and from Zaida to the Comic Romance, is to go from good company to the tavern. But men of taste are not without indulgence for mirth; it is so entertaining; this book possesses much of it and of the best kind. The character of Rancune is lively, true and well drawn; and many chapters, among others that of the boots, are treated with much pleasantry. The style is natural and animated; it is even purer than that of any other writing of the same author. We may pass over all the novels which he has taken from the Spaniards, or in which he has imitated their taste. I would infinitely prefer Ragotin to those insipid love scenes and frigid intrigues. His Virgil travestied is insupportable at the end of two pages. Jodelet and D. Japhet are disgusting, totally unworthy of the French stage. The comic romance is infinitely superior; to speak correctly it is all that remains of Scarron; and what has been now mentioned contains the best of the romances of the last age; for Gil Blas belongs to ours; and Mademoiselle de la Force, author of "the Secret History of Burgundy," and Mademoiselle d'Aulnoy, author of "Hyppolitus, Earl of Douglas," a romance of some talent, are but imitators of Madame de la Fayette, far inferior to their model in the art of invention and writing.

HISTORICAL INACCURACY OF SALLUST.

IT appears to me a somewhat singular circumstance that, as far as I can conjecture, no notice has been hitherto taken of a very egregious historical inaccuracy into which Sallust has fallen, in the speech which he has attributed to Cato, on the subject of the conspiracy of Cataline. The passage I allude to, is as follows:

"Apud Majores nostros, Titus Manlius Torquatus, *bello Gallico*, filium suum quod is contra imperium, in hostem pugnaverat, necari jussit."

"In the times of our forefathers, Titus Manlius Torquatus, in the *Gallic war*, ordered his own son to be executed, because he presumed to fight against the enemy, contrary to his express command."

To a person even slightly acquainted with the occurrences of the Roman History, it will instantly occur, that the death of Manlius Torquatus' son did not happen during this war with the Gauls, but with that in which the Romans were involved with their neighbours, the Latins; the similarity of dress, customs, discipline, language, &c. &c. which prevailed in the two adverse armies, made it necessary to enforce the strictest attention to the orders of the general. Considerations not at all necessary to be attended to in the contest with their Trans-Alpine antagonists.

The inaccuracy may have arisen in the mind of the historian, by the

following confusion of historical occurrences.

Titus Manlius, the father, signalized himself in the Gaulish wars, by killing a warrior of gigantic stature, and atripping him of his golden collar, for which he received the *Agnomen* of *Torquatus*. See Livy, b. vii. c. 9.

Titus Manlius, the son of the former, was likewise equally signalized for his victory over Metius, the general of the Latin cavalry. See Livy, b. viii. c. 7.

It might have happened that the two circumstances with respect to the father and the son agreeing in so many points, had been confounded by Sallust. But what makes his inaccuracy wholly inexcusable, is that in the speech of Cato he gives the *Agnomen Torquatus*, in addition to the original name of T. Manlius, which should have brought to his mind the circumstances of the Gaulic war, and have served to guard him against this confusion of facts.

The error may be considered a rivial one: perhaps it may be so, but, I hope, this will not expose me to the imputation of hypercriticism on the subject. In fact I have considered it no small heightening of the tragic scene, exhibited in the execution of the younger Manlius, that he suffered for his temerity in braving the orders of his general, to prove that the valour of the son had not degenerated from that of the father. In dilating on the inaccuracy of Sallust, I have rather sought an opportunity of exhibiting the fact in a point of view more interesting than can be expected from not reflecting, that young Manlius pleaded in excuse for his breach of discipline, that in accepting the challenge of Mutius and slaying him, he only proved himself the descendant of him who had exhibited the same process against the gigantic Gaul. Who is there who feels not the agonizing reflections which must have crossed the mind of his father, when he found himself compelled for *such* a fault, to offer the youthful warrior as a sacrifice to the safety of Rome.

Newry, 1st Dec. 1808. W.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The First, Second and Sixth Books of Euclid's Elements Demonstrated in general Terms, with Notes and Observations for the use of younger Students; by John Walker, late Fellow of Dublin College. 8vo. price 4s. 7d. Dublin printed by John Napper, 29. Capel-street, and sold by the author, 73 Lower Dorset-street, B. Dugdale, Dame-street, and M. Keene, College-green.

A GENTLEMAN (of Bristol if we remember aright) some few years back invented a mode of instructing pupils in the Elements of Euclid, by means of figures of timber, constructed in imitation of the diagrams, by which two notable advantages were obtained; more employment was cut out for that useful class of men, the *country carpenters*, and whenever a pupil was learning his lesson by the help of those *wooden assistants*, he might be said to have his business at his *finger's ends*.

But though we give all due credit to these devices, we must confess they are not of sufficient consequence, or merit to make us adopt or approve of them in the education of pupils, at any stage of life. By persons in the habit of instructing in the mathematics, it must have been frequently noticed how much young pupils are inclined to reason *specially* in that science, and with what difficulty they are brought to apply the principles of it generally. The difficulty is not a little increased by the unhappy though unavoidable use of letters, in the description of the sides or angles to be expressed. Where the lines or angles can be so easily pointed out by the pupil to the master, to retain the letters in proving the propositions, is only an incumbrance, and serves but to bind down the pupil's mind to the individual proposition; their only use consists in their being a substitute for the *finger* of a master, and